

addressed individually below.

Antonius + Hirose + Scheie

Claims 50-52, 54, and 61-64 were rejected in the Office Action for obviousness over Antonius in view of Hirose and Scheie. Antonius describes "an iron type golf club head having raised, spaced skid members projecting from the sole and raising the sole above the ground" (Abstract, line 1). The Examiner points to Figure 11 of Antonius as depicting an iron-type club whose shaft forms a non-zero lean angle with the vertical when the head rests on its sole (via the skid members).

Applicant respectfully submits that the club depicted in Figure 11 of Antonius *does not have* a non-zero lean angle as recited in the present claims. The claims recite a club having a non-zero lean angle *when the head rests on its sole so that its face achieves its design loft*. Figure 11 of Antonius clearly shows a club that has *zero* lean angle when the head rests on its sole so that its face achieves its design loft. This fact can be appreciated by comparing Figure 11 with Figure 10. Figure 10 shows a standard zero lean angle club with a 48° design loft. Figure 11 shows *the same club* with added bounce so that the club can be used in "sandtraps and heavy grass" (see column 4, lines 61-62). The line marked "0°" in Figure 11 represents "the flat". Antonius makes clear that the club achieves its design loft when the shaft is *perfectly perpendicular with* this flat. Thus, Antonius clearly indicates that a non-zero lean angle is *undesirable*. Not only does Antonius not anticipate the present claims, it teaches away from them. Any combination of Antonius with another reference would similarly require a perpendicular shaft when the head is positioned at its design loft; no combination of Antonius with any other reference could possibly render obvious the present claims.

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Turner in view of MacDonald

Claims 51, 53, 59-60 and 65 are rejected in the Office Action as obvious over Turner in view of MacDonald. As Applicant has previously discussed, Turner describes a wood-type club with a *both* large negative offset and an angled hosel. The Examiner acknowledges that Turner does not teach iron-type clubs, but cites MacDonald as teaching an iron-type club to which the teachings of Turner are applicable. The Examiner asserts that a combination of Turner with MacDonald renders obvious the present claims.

Agree

Applicant disagrees. MacDonald discloses an iron-type club whose shaft is attached to the head by means of a mounting means on the rear face of the head. The Examiner states that MacDonald "appears" to show angling of the shaft toward the face of the club. However, MacDonald states that the shaft of his club is attached "with axis 26 lying in a vertical plane from which the loft angle of the striking face 20 is measured" (column 3, lines 2-4). Thus, MacDonald clearly teaches an iron-type club whose shaft is offset and attached at the rear of the head, but is *not angled*.

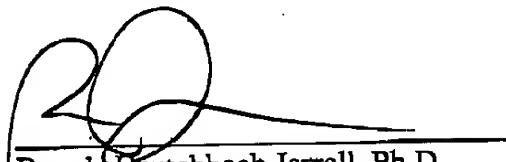
The Examiner is therefore attempting to combine 1) a *wood-type* club with *both a large offset* (via attachment *at the heel*) and an *angled* hosel with 2) an *iron-type* club in which the shaft attaches by way of the *rear face* of the head and there is explicitly *no angle* in the attachment in order to obtain the presently-claimed invention. Applicant respectfully submits that it is not clear what item could result from a combination of these two references. Certainly, absent the teachings of the present specification, there is no reason to select *only* the iron aspect of MacDonald and combine it with *only* the angled aspect of Turner. To do so would violate the explicit teachings of both references. For at least this reason, Applicant respectfully submits that the stated combination cannot be made and, if made, cannot render obvious the present claims. Furthermore, Applicant points out the present Amendment adds new claims 66-69, each of which specifically recites that attachment of the shaft to the head occurs at the heel end of the head, as depicted in several Figures (see, for example, Figures 3, 6, and 7 in the present specification). No combination of Turner and MacDonald could possibly render obvious these claims.

Conclusion

Based on the arguments presented above, it is submitted that the pending claims, as amended herein, are allowable over the art of record. A Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 03-1721.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 2/19/2003

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FEB 19 2003

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